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ABSTRACT

Students are introduced to the Haida language as well as to traditional Haida foods in this booklet, one in a series of curriculum materials on Southeast Alaska Natives. Ten selections written in simple language describe a Haida barbecue, Indian bread, sea cucumbers, black sea weed, the edible pulp sap of Hemlock, Indian ice cream made from soap berries, catching a ptarmigan, skukum root medicine, and Devil's Club Tonic. Readings include methods of food preparation, recipes, and time and place for gathering each food. Traditional customs associated with the foods are included; e.g., Devil's Club Tonic is made for a member of one phratry (Eagle or Raven) by a member of the opposite phratry and requires a token payment by the recipient. Many Haida words are included in the text and placed in parentheses following the English translation. Line drawings illustrate cooking methods, utensils, and the edible plants and animals. (JH)

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HAIDA FOOD GATHERING AND PREPARATION

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ROBERT COGO

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Exhibit U

Haida Food Gathering
And
Preparation

Written By: Robert Cogo
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INTRODUCTION

ROBERT COGO IS AN EXPERT IN SPEAKING, WRITING AND READING THE HAIDA LANGUAGE. HE ALSO KNOWS THE GEOGRAPHY, MYTHOLOGY, CUSTOMS AND LEGENDS OF SOUTHEAST ALASKA. HIS GOAL IS TO PRESERVE AND TO FURTHER THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HAIDA CULTURE AND LANGUAGE THROUGH HIS WRITING.

WE HOPE THAT HIS DESCRIPTIONS OF FOOD GATHERING AND PREPARATION WILL INSPIRE YOU AND YOUR STUDENTS OR FAMILY TO TRY SOME OF THESE METHODS.

THIS BOOKLET CAN ALSO BE USED TO LEARN MANY HAIDA WORDS. IT MAY LEAD YOU TO FURTHER RESEARCH, ACTIVITIES AND LANGUAGE STUDY. YOU MAY WANT TO INVITE A GUEST TO SHARE OTHER METHODS OF GATHERING AND TO DEMONSTRATE FOOD PREPARATION. GRANDPARENTS ARE OFTEN A GOOD SOURCE OF INFORMATION AND STUDENTS MAY INTERVIEW THEM. SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITES ON SOUTHEAST ALASKA INDIAN CULTURE ARE AVAILABLE FROM OUR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM.

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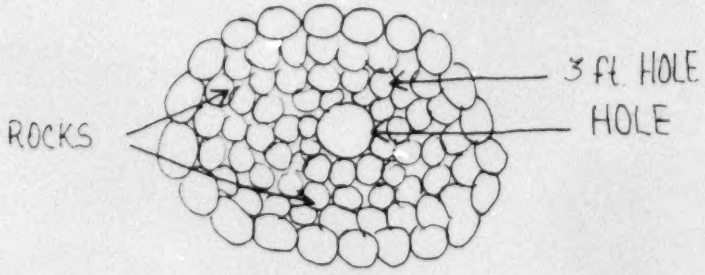
A Barbecue
(saulgudáa)

Haida Cooking and Feast
(xaadas taawaay)

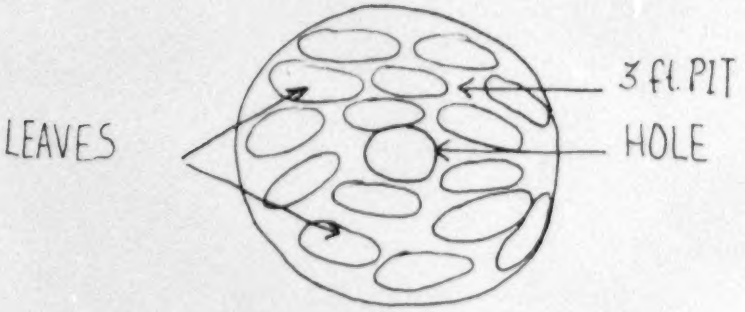
In the old days, Haidas (xaadas) usually congregated in food gathering places or fishing villages. It was during these times, in spring (k'íntl'eihl) and summer (k'ínat), that the people (xaat'áay) would watch for a chance to sponsor a big barbecue. This was done on the beach in large, open pits about six feet across and three feet deep. First there was a leader or head cook to supervise all the preparations. A nice, sunny day (xáyaa) was picked for the occasion. Next the older men and boys (íihlangaa) started to gather drift wood (t'áwswaal). A large pile of wood (kuk) was gathered in this way. They needed all this wood for the large fire to be built over the open pit. The boys brought in a large pile of round and smooth rocks (kwaa) to line

THE PIT BEFORE THE FIRE WAS BUILT OVER IT. THIS KIND OF BARBECUE COOKING WAS CALLED (SAHLGUDÁA). THESE ROUND AND SMOOTH ROCKS LINED IN THE PIT ALSO MAKE A GOOD FOUNDATION OVER WHICH THE FOOD (TÁAW) WOULD BE COOKED. THEY BUILT THE FIRE (TS'ÁANUU) OVER THIS PIT LINED WITH THE ROCKS AND THE ROCKS WERE RED HOT (SGÍIHLDAJAA) WHEN THE FIRE HAD BURNED DOWN. THE COALS (DÁAS) WERE THEN RAKED BACK OUT OF THE PIT WHICH WAS THEN LINED WITH ROUND AND SMOOTH ROCKS. OVER THE PIT LINED WITH THE ROCKS WAS BUILT A LARGE OPEN FIRE.



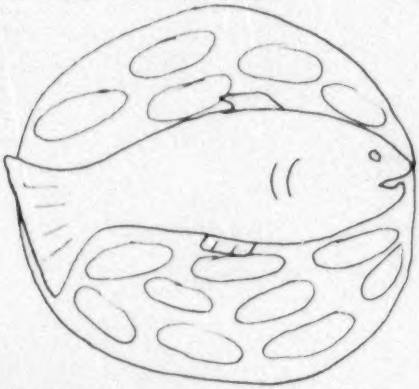
THE FIRE BURNT DOWN LEAVING THE PIT AND ROCKS RED HOT. THE HOT COALS WERE RAKED AND SMOOTHED OVER. THEN LINE OVER THE ROCKS WITH SKUNK

CABBAGE LEAVES. THE LEAVES VARY IN SIZE. 8 INCHES BY 2 OR 3 FEET MAKE A GOOD COVER AND SEAL A FIRM COVERAGE WHEN PLACED O'/ER THE HOT ROCKS.



AFTER THE PIT WAS LINED WITH LEAVES (XÍL), THE FOOD WAS PLACED IN LAYERS OVER THE LEAVES. FISH (CHÍIN), THEN MEAT (KYAA), THEN CLAMS (K'YÚU), THEN POTATOES (SGÚUSITT), AND ABALONE (GÚLAA) TO NAME SOME OF THE FOOD. THIS WAS DONE UNTIL THE PIT WAS FULL.

SEAL MEAT (XÚUT KI'ÍI) AND DEER MEAT (K'ÁAT KI'ÍI) WERE USED EXTENSIVELY. AFTER ALL THE LAYERS OF FOOD WERE COVERED AND LINED WITH SKUNK CABBAGE (HLGÚN), A ROUND PATTERN WAS MADE WITH THE LEAVES (XÍL) TO CONFORM TO ROUND PIT. A HOLE (XÍILAA) WAS LEFT IN THE MIDDLE RUNNING DOWN TO THE BOTTOM TO THE HOT ROCKS.



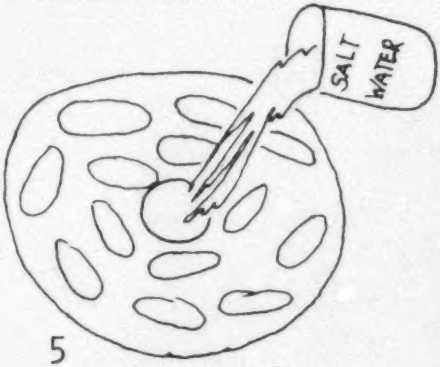
TEN GALLONS OF SALT WATER WAS POURED INTO THE HOLE. TWO CLEAN, FIVE-GALLON OIL CANS (XAHLTAWT) WERE READIED WITH CLEAN SALT WATER (TANG). THIS PROCESS WAS USED TO GIVE THE FOOD THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF SALT FLAVOR. NO SAUCE OR PEPPER WAS USED. THE SALT WATER

WAS POURED DOWN THE HOLE. A GREAT REACTION OF NOISE OF BOILING WATER AND STEAM TOOK PLACE. THE FOOD WAS COOKING WELL AND AFTER ONE HALF HOUR (K'ASGAT INWÁAY) IT SLOWED DOWN TO A SIMMER (TLANG GALANG) AND COOKED THIS WAY FOR A TOTAL OF TWO HOURS (K'ASGAT SDÁNG).

THE WHOLE CAMP TOOK PART IN THE DOINGS. EVERYONE WAS INVITED TO THE FEAST TO TAKE PLACE (DÁA YAANG AND LÁAGANAANG). EVERY-ONE BROUGHT THEIR OWN DISHES (KÍIHLAA) AND FORKS (GATÁAW).

SOME OF THE FINEST FLAVORED COOKING COMES FROM THESE BARBECUE PITS AND IS AS OLD AS THE NATIVE TRADITIONS AND KNOW HOW.

(XAADAS TLÁAY UUÍIJANG) THANK YOU FOR ALL THE GOOD FOOD. (HÁAWA TÁAW LAA SÁNG HL KÍL LAA GANG).



Haida Indian Bread

Xaadas sablii

In the old days camping out was a must. There were seasons for food (táaw) gathering when the weather was good (sáng-láas-dlúu). It is no surprise then that younger people (dláay-láa) learned to do things from watching their elders. On one of these camping trips to the outer coast (tlagánhlaa), I had occasion to watch my aunt (skáan) bake some pan roasted bread (sablíi-skidáa). Having no bowl to mix the dough they put the flour sack down into the sand to make it steady. They rolled the top edges down till the flour was reached and then cupped a bowl like hole on top of the flour within the sack (gwaahl). Water (gántl) was added and poured in the flour. Mixing the dough to the right consistency was done by hand. Baking powder, salt (tang) and lard (láad) were added and

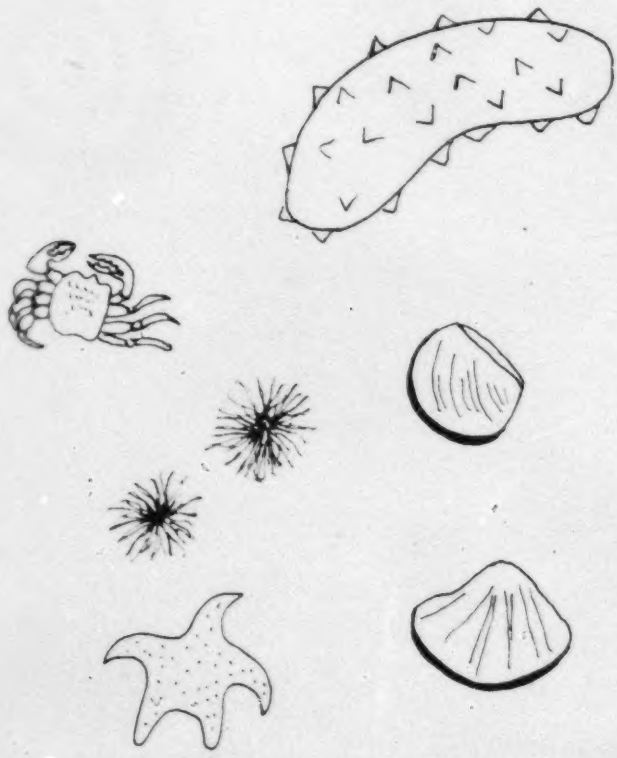
MIXED TILL A NICE FIRM DOUGH WAS MADE. A CLEAN FLAT ROCK (KWAA) WAS THEN USED TO ROLL AND PRESS THE DOUGH TO SIZE AND THICKNESS. A LARGE CAST IRON FRYING PAN (GAAL-ÁANGW) WAS GREASED (TÁWDAA) AND THE DOUGH PRESSED TO ABOUT AN INCH THICK AND THE SIZE OF THE PAN IN WIDTH WAS PLACED BEFORE AN OPEN FIRE (TS'ÁANUU) TILTED ON EDGE TO BAKE. AFTER ONE SIDE HAS BAKED FOR ABOUT FIFTEEN MINUTES OR STARTS TO TURN BROWN TURN THE BREAD (SABLÍI) AROUND AND BAKE THE OTHER SIDE FOR THE SAME PERIOD OF TIME. TOTAL BAKING TIME ABOUT ONE HALF HOUR (K'ASGATINWÁAY). CUT UP IN PIECES AND EAT (HLDANÚU). LACE WITH SUGAR (SÚUGAA) AND MOLASSES (WULÁASAS). IT IS GOOD FOOD. (TÁAW-LÁA-UU-ÍIJANG).

Sea Cucumber
(Yáanuu)

We were lying at a cove inside cape Flores (ts'inuk'úu) on a gas boat when a bad storm came up and we had to wait for the weather to abate. We were short on provisions (taawáay). We had some round crackers (gílk), potatoes (sgúusiit), and few other food items (taawgyáa). There were four (stánsang) of us in the party and right away talk centered on living off the beach if we were stormed in for several days (sang sdáng). The tides were big and towards the afternoon (santajaa salíit) there was a big minus tide (chaaw íwaan). One of the group got a small dip net from the rigging. There was about six feet (xít gagíi) of water under the boat at low tide. We could see a few star fish (sk'áam), small crabs (ts'a'ám) and a number of sea cucumbers (yáanuu) on the bottom sand. The

DIP NET WAS ABOUT TWELVE FEET LONG (XÍT-GAGÍI) (SDÁNG) AND IN JUST A FEW MINUTES, WE SCOOPED UP ABOUT TEN (TLÁAHL) SEA CUCUMBERS (YÁANUU). WE WENT ABOUT TAKING THE SKIN (K'AL) OFF THE SEA CUCUMBERS (YÁAHUU). THIS WAS EASY AS THE OUTER SKIN PEELED RIGHT OFF LEAVING A STRIP OF WHITE MEAT MUCH LIKE CLAMS (K'YÚU). WE DICED THIS INTO SMALL PIECES AND SOON HAD ENOUGH FOR A NICE CHOWDER. WE BOILED SOME SMALL PIECES OF POTATOES (SGÚUSIIT) AND ONIONS ALSO SMALL PIECES OF BACON (BÍIGAN). THIS WAS BOILED FOR ABOUT TEN MINUTES AND THEN THE CUP OF SEA CUCUMBER (YÁANUU) WAS ADDED. BOILED FOR ANOTHER FIVE MINUTES. THIS CHOWDER CANNOT BE BEAT FOR FLAVOR AND IN MY ESTIMATION IS BETTER THAN CLAMS (K'YÚU). AFTER SERVING IN BOWLS, MIX WITH A LITTLE CANNED MILK. THIS CHOWDER IS RELISHED BY GOURMETS. THE TLINGITS HAVE ALMOST THE SAME NAME FOR SEA CUCUMBER (YÁAN). THIS WAS ONE OF THE STAPLE FOODS (TÁAW) FOR

NATIVES (XAATGÁAY) IN THE OLD DAYS. A NUMBER OF PEOPLE STILL USE IT AS FOOD (TÁAW).



(sgíw)

Black Seaweed

There is no native home (na) even at the present time that doesn't have some form of native food (táaw). There is a variety of native foods kept in stock and refridgerators. One important native food is black seaweed (sgíw). This is gathered locally in the month of May (sgíwnuut). Black seaweed (sgíw) grows on smooth rocks (kwaa) close to the ocean (síigaay) side. They are pulled off the rocks by hand and put into clean flour sacks (gwaahl) or old pillow (ts'ahl) cases. After you gather about four or six bags you have about enough seaweed for drying and curing in the sun (júuyaay). A good way of preliminary drying was done on the beach on nice sunny days (sáng-láa). After drying awhile a person taking a handful would twist up the seaweed

IN SPIRALS AND STORE FOR FUTURE USE. THIS COULD BE CALLED A SEAWEED (SGÍW) TWIST. THIS PRELIMINARY DRYING PREVENTED THE SEAWEED FROM TURNING WHITE AND SOUR.

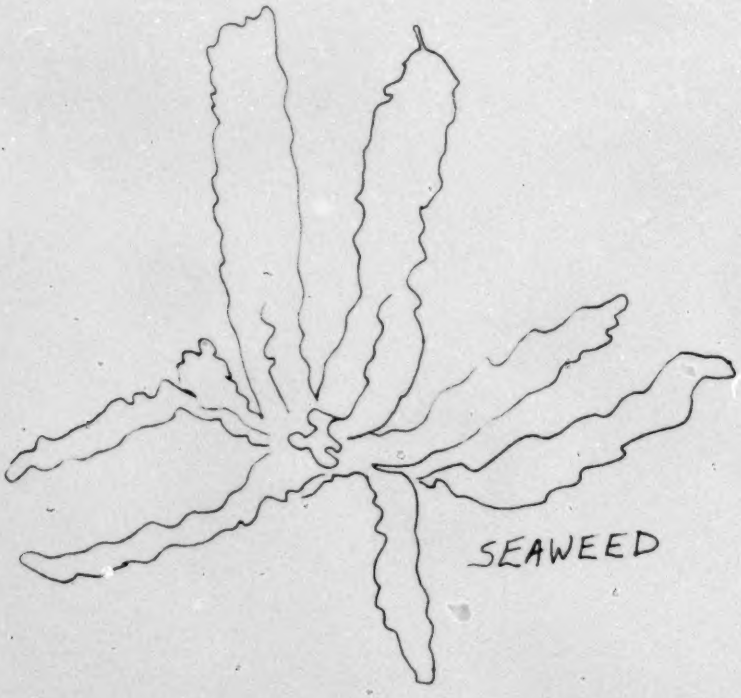
THE NEXT PROCESS WAS DRYING AND CURING SEAWEED INTO ONE HALF INCH THICK CAKES ABOUT NINE INCHES SQUARE. FRESH CLAM JUICE (KYÚU'-XÁW) WAS SPRINKLED OVER EACH CAKE AND LAYER. A SQUARE BOARD (K'AW) WAS PLACED OVER THE STACK OF SEAWEED AND PRESSED WITH STONE WEIGHTS. THIS GAVE THE CAKES CONSISTENCY. ANOTHER PROCESS INVOLVED GRINDING THE SEAWEED (SGÍW) IN A MEAT GRINDER. AFTER BEING GROUND, THE SEAWEED IS PLACED AND SPREAD OUT OVER A CLEAN SHEET OR TABLE COVER WHICH IS SPREAD OVER WIDE BOARDS OF PLYWOOD. THIS PROCESS GIVES IT THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF DRYING AND THE SEAWEED (SGÍW) IS PUT IN LARGE COFFEE CANS (XAHL-TAWT) FOR STORAGE. MANY NON-NATIVES BUY AND CHEW ON SEAWEED (SGÍW). IT IS BENEFICIAL IN IODINE AND PLEASANT TO THE TASTE.

WHEN COOKED WITH OTHER FOODS, ESPECIALLY FISH, IT BRINGS OUT THE FLAVOR AND RELISHES AS SUCH. THERE ARE SOME SEAWEED (SGÍW) RECIPES THAT ARE MUCH IN DEMAND. ANOTHER PROCESS IS ROASTING SEAWEED CRISP IN THE OVEN OR BEFORE AN OPEN FIRE (TS'ÁANUU). CARE MUST BE TAKEN NOT TO OVER ROAST OR BURN THE SEAWEED (SGÍW). AFTER ROASTING THIS IS ALSO PLACED IN LARGE COFFEE CANS (XAHL-TAWT) FOR STORAGE.

BOILED FISH (CHÍIN) AND SEAWEED (SGÍW) RECIPE: BOIL ABOUT ONE POUND FILLET OF SALMON (CHÍIN) OR RED SNAPPER (SGÁN). BOIL (TS'ÁSLANG) FOR HALF HOUR (K'ASGATINWÁAY) (DLÚU). NEXT PUT IN DRIED GROUND OR ROASTED SEAWEED (SGÍW-XÍGAA) TILL THE RIGHT CONSISTENCY IS REACHED. SALT TO TASTE. SERVE WITH OOLIGAN GREASE (SATÁW) OR MILK (TL'ÁNUU). SOME PEOPLE PREFER SOY SAUCE FOR SEASONING.

CLAM (K'YÚU) AND SEAWEED (SGÍW) RECIPE: DICE ABOUT EIGHT FRESH CLAMS (K'YÚU) SAVE

THE JUICE (XAW). PUT THE DICED CLAMS (K'YÚU) AND JUICE (XAW) INTO A SAUCE PAN (TS'ASLÁANGW). POUR IN ONE QUART OF BOILING WATER (GÁNTL-SK'ALDÁA). ADD SEAWEED (SGÍW) TO RIGHT CONSISTENCY AND SIMMER FOR FIVE MINUTES. SERVE THE SAME AS WITH FISH (CHÍIN).



Herring Eggs
(k'áaw)
Harvest

Herring spawn (k'áaw) was seasonal in Haida country (xaadstlagáa). The months of March or April was known as (k'áawnuut) or herring spawn season. This was one of the food (táaw) gathering seasons of the people (xaat'áay). Fish egg island near Craig was called (kaaws-tláay) by the Haida (xaadas). This was a great spawning area. People came from all over the district to harvest the eggs. In the early days there was several methods used in getting the eggs. Harvesting one or the other of three (hlg-únahl) different kinds of kelp on which herring had spawned was always ready to harvest. The broad leaf kelp (ngáal) was the most sought after. The hair like kelp (kAtsjánt) was next. The yellow rock kelp

WAS THE LEAST SOUGHT AFTER AND WAS CALLED (T'ÁL). THESE THREE WERE HUNG OUT ON LINES OR POLES TO DRY AND CURE (XILÁADAA) IN THE SUN (JUUYÁAY) OR (XÁYAA). ANOTHER WAY TO HARVEST HERRING EGGS WAS TO SECURE SOME YOUNG HEMLOCK (K'ÁANG) TREES ABOUT SIX OR EIGHT FEET TALL. THESE HAD SOFT NEEDLES (K'ÁMAAL) AND THE HERRING (ÍINAANG) SPAWNED ON IT ALREADY. THESE WERE WEIGHED DOWN BY A ROCK (KWAA) TIED TO IT AS AN ANCHOR (T'ÁAHL). A MARKED BUOY WAS ATTACHED FOR IDENTIFICATION BY THE OWNER. THIS WAS LEFT OUT OVER NIGHT (GÁAL-SGASK) AND HARVESTED NEXT DAY. THE BRANCHES WERE BROKEN OR CUT OFF AND PILED ON A CANOE OR BOAT (TLÚU). THIS WAS ALSO DRIED AND CURED LIKE THE KELP KIND. AFTER DRYING THOROUGHLY THE EGGS WERE SORTED AND PACKED IN STORAGE BOXES (TAWT). THIS WAS FOR THE WINTER MONTHS (SÁNGAATS-DLÚU). IN LATER YEARS A LARGE PART OF THE HARVEST WAS SALTED DOWN IN BARRELS (SK'ATS'ÁANGW). IN RECENT YEARS MUCH

OF THE HARVEST WAS PUT IN DEEP FREEZE AND FROZEN FOR FUTURE USE (KÁHL DI'AA).

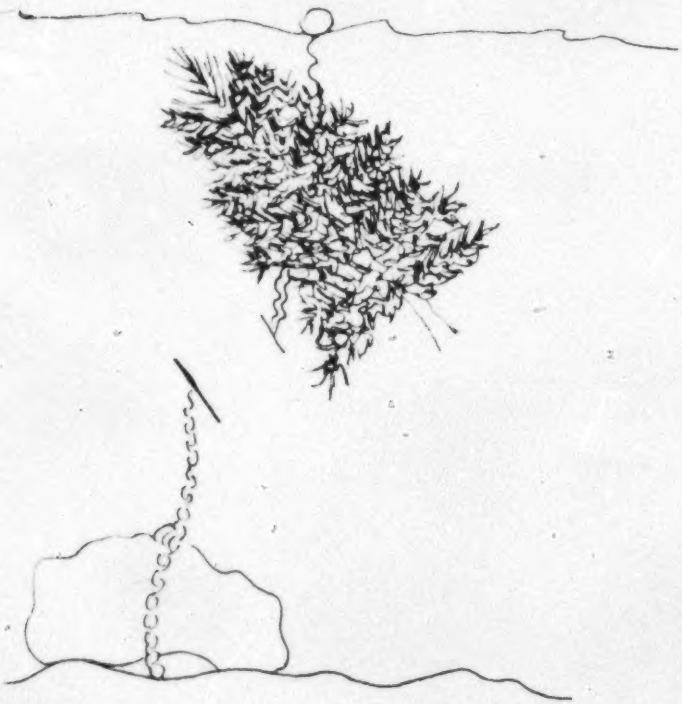
ABOUT TWELVE YEARS AGO (TADÁA-TLÁAHL WÁAK SDÁNG) A MARKET WAS OPENED FOR HERRING EGGS (K'ÁAW).

THE COMMERCIAL HARVEST WAS NOT CONTROLLED BY THE FISHERIES DEPARTMENT VERY WELL AT THE START AND ALMOST CAUSED A DEPLETION OF THE SPAWN. THERE WAS TOO MUCH INTERFERENCE WITH THE NATURAL PROCESS OF NATURE. THERE WAS AN OVERHARVEST. TODAY THE FISHERY RULES ARE VERY STRINGENT.

OLD TIMERS SAY THAT IN THEIR DAY A PERSON COULD ALMOST WALK ON THE HERRING (ÍINAANG). THIS WAS TRUE IN MY TIME ABOUT FORTY OF FIFTY YEARS AGO (TADÁA-TLAALÁAY-SDÁNSANG) (ISGYÁAN) (TADÁA-TLAALÁAY-TLEÍHL) (HANS) OR (HANSAN), MEANING (TOO) IN ENGLISH AND (TOGETHER).

IN THE QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS, THE SPAWNING TAKES PLACE IN SKIDEGATE INLET

(HLGAAYÚU). ON SOUTHERN PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND ON THE WEST COAST (KYÁAGÚUST) THEY SPAWN, THE CRAIG (K'ÁAW-TLÁAY) DISTRICT AND IN THE HYDABURG (XÍKT'AA) DISTRICT.



Edible Pulp Sap
Of Hemlock (xi)

Pulp sap (xi) of the hemlock tree (k'áang kíidaay) was a source of food (táaw) for the haida (xaadas). In May or June (k'íntl'eihl) the sap of the hemlock (k'áang) is running readily and it is the best time to get the pulp (xi). A hemlock tree (k'áang kíidaay) was usually cut down for the purpose but some time a fresh wind fall would be selected. The bark is carefully notched around the tree about every six feet (xítgagíi) and then a careful peeling process takes place. A flat paddle-like pick called (dlakw) in haida is used to spade and peel the bark (k'uts) off the tree. This comes off in sheets and is scraped with a rounded fish knife (taak-adáaw). The sap is scraped into enamel buckets (ganáay) or pots (gan). This pulp

(XI) IS SORT OF MILKY TEXTURE AND HAS A PLEASANT TASTE. IT IS SPRINKLED OVER WITH SUGAR (SÚUGAA) AND LACED WITH OOLIGAN OIL (SATÁW). I HAVE EATEN THIS DELICACY AND ENJOYED IT VERY MUCH. WHITE PEOPLE (YA'-ÁATS XAATÁAY) WHO HAVE EATEN THIS FOOD (TÁAW) HAVE SPOKEN HIGHLY OF THIS FOOD (TÁAW). THIS IS ONE OF THE MANY DISHES SERVED AS DESSERT (GIN XÁWLAA) AT A HAIDA MEAL.

Indian Ice Cream
Soap Berries
(Xakwtl'íit)

Soap berries (xakwtl'íit) have been a part of the Haida diet from way back when trade was established with mainland Tlingit (hlanggas) and Tsimpsean (kílaas). Some of these people lived along the great rivers of Chilkat, Stikine, and Nass. Soap berries grew along the river banks. There does not seem to be a root meaning in Haida for the word (xakwtlíit) so most likely it is a borrowed word from Tlingit or Tsimpsean. (hlanggas or kílaas). It is called soap berries because when it is whipped up it becomes frothy and resembles soap suds. When sugar (súugaa) is added to the froth, it becomes a delicacy and is relished by gourmets. In our home, we get some in jars about once a year. This usually comes from

CANADA OR THE COUNTRY NORTH (SAHGWÍI). LIKE EVERYTHING THAT IS SCARCE, SOAP BERRIES IS ONE OF THEM AND IS MUCH APPRECIATED WHEN RECEIVED. AROUND 1910, I REMEMBER LARGE GATHERINGS IN WHICH SOAP BERRIES WERE SERVED. THIS WAS DONE ON INVITATION OF A CHIEF AND COULD BE HELD IN THE OPEN AIR ON NICE DAYS (SÁNGLÁA) OR INSIDE ON BAD DAYS (SÁN DAHGÁNG). MOST OF THE PEOPLE DID NOT HAVE SOAP BERRIES SO THIS WAS A GREAT TREAT. JUST LIKE INVITING SOMEONE INTO AN ICE CREAM PARLOR. WHEN EVERYONE WAS JUST ABOUT THROUGH, THE FUN BEGAN. SOMEONE WOULD GIVE THE WORD, AND AS ONE EVERYONE BEGAN TO DAB EACH OTHER WITH THE SOAP BERRIES. SORT OF A SMEAR PARTY. THUS ENDED A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL. THE CLOSEST THING TO THIS WOULD BE A PIE THROWING DEAL.

(XAKWTL'ÍIT GANS TL'AK DUUS). IN BEHALF OF SOAP BERRIES, YOU ARE INVITED.

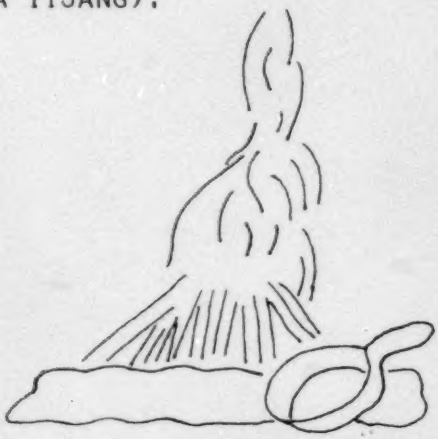
Catching A Ptarmigan
(Sḵáw tl' gitsgíihldaas)

In the old days, before guns (juk), the Haida boy (gaaíihlangaa) was taught different ways of catching and securing food (táaw). We will now go on a ptarmigan (skáw) hunting trip. For many days, a young nephew named "aantl'íik" had been waiting for this opportunity to go out in the woods (ḵíidáay ḵaahlii). He is awakened very early in the morning (sangáay) by his uncle (ḵáa). Early morning, "get away" was a must in Haida living; no sleepy heads (ḵángxaawldáa), no lazy bones (gúugaa). You had to be up and at it and raring to go--a good worker (gwúlgaa). After gaining the woods, they would look for a cedar tree (ts'úu kiidáay). It was the long, slender boughs of the cedar (ts'úu) they wanted. From this with its long, soft tip, they could rub and soften

THE ENDS TO MAKE A NOOSE. THIS BECAME A VERY EFFECTIVE SNARE. WHEN IN THE WOODS (ADÍITSII), A PERSON OFTEN RUNS ACROSS A FLOCK OF ABOUT 8 OR 10 PTARMIGAN (SKÁW) USUALLY ON THE EDGE OF THE WOODS AND SEMI-MUSKEG (KÁLGAA). A GOOD TIME TO GO AFTER PTARMIGAN OR GROUSE (SKÁW) IS IN THE FALL (CHÁANUUT). THEY ARE THEN FAT AND FIRM (GÁAYAA) FROM FEEDING ON SEEDS (MÁAHL) AND BERRIES (GÁAN). THEY ARE ALSO CHANGING COLOR TO SNOW WHITE (GAT).

THE YOUNG NEPHEW NAMED "AANTL'ÍIK" IS WITH HIS UNCLE (KÁA). THEY RUN ACROSS A FLOCK OF PRARMIGAN (SKÁW). PTARMIGAN (SKÁW) WERE VERY INQUISITIVE AND DID NOT TAKE TO FLIGHT (XÍT) RIGHT AWAY. THE NATIVES TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THIS RIGHT AWAY, MAKING MORE NOISE, TALKING LOUDLY, AND SAYING OVERTURES OF GOOK LUCK TOWARD THE BIRDS. AFTER ALL, THE NATIVES BELIEVED IN DOING THE RIGHT THING AND NOT OFFEND THE SPIRITS (SGÁANUWÁAY)

AT THE SAME TIME. THE UNCLE (KÁA) THUS CALLED OUT IN A LOUD VOICE THAT HE WANTED TO FILL HIS LARDER WITH FOOD (TÁAW). SLOWLY THE LONG CEDAR (TS'ÚU) LIMB WITH THE SNARE ON THE END WAS LOWERED TOWARDS THE FIRST BIRD. THE PTARMIGAN (SKÁW) SAT QUIETLY AND SPELLBOUND. A FRONTAL SCOOP WITH THE SNARE OVER THE BIRD CINCHED THE NOOSE AND A PTARMIGAN WAS CAUGHT. THIS PROCESS WAS REPEATED FOR MORE BIRDS AND YOUNG "AANTL'ÍIK" HAD LEARNED TO CATCH HIS FIRST PTARMIGAN (SKÁW). PTARMIGAN IS GOOD FOOD. (SKÁW ÚUTÁAW LÁA ÍIJANG).



Skukum Root
Medicine
(gwáayk'aa)

There were many forms of medicine made by the Haídas (xaadas) in the old days. Some people make some and use it in the present day (áayaat). Most of the medicine (xíl) is made from herbs, bark and roots (k'uts) and (k'úl) was taken internally. It was taken a cupful (sk'atl'áangw-sk'askw) at a time. The same was true of devil's club medicine (ts'íih-lanjaa-xíl).

The plant called hellebore in English and scientifically veratrum viride was used by Germans anciently. It was a supposed cure for insanity and the powdered, dried root of the plant destroys vermin. One medicine (xíl) that comes to mind is "skukum root" meaning strong root in Chinook. The Haidas call it (gwáayk'aa), and was used extensively as it

HAD A NARCOTIC TRAIT. IT WAS USED FOR PAIN AND AS A TRANQUILIZER. AFTER YOU DIG UP THE BULBOUS ROOT STEM YOU CUT IT OFF ABOUT THREE INCHES LONG AND LAY IN A TRAY TO DRY OUT ON TOP OF A STOVE. THERE IS JUST ONE ROOT TO A PLANT. YOU CAN RECOGNIZE THE PLANT BY ITS TWO OBLONG LEAVES FROM EIGHT TO TEN INCHES LONG. IT DOES NOT FLOWER AND GROWS IN SEMI MUSKEG (K'ÁLGAA) PLACES. THE PLANT IS NOT NUMEROUS AND EASILY DETECTED BY ITS OBLONG LEAVES.

AFTER THE ROOT DRIES OUT YOU PUT IT IN A POT (GAN) AND FILL THE POT (GAN) ABOUT THREE FOURTHS FULL OF WATER (GÁNTL-TAHLJÚU). YOU LET STAND AND SIMMER OVER HEAT FOR ONE HOUR (K'ASGAT-SGAANSANG). THE BREW FROM THIS IS CRYSTAL CLEAR AND IS VERY POWERFUL AND IS TAKEN SPARINGLY. A DOSE OF ONE TEASPOON (K'AAS-SDLÁAGWAAL-T'-AWSK') IN A GLASS OF WATER IS ENOUGH AND THE EFFECTS ARE FELT ALMOST IMMEDIATELY. I

KNOW OF SOME PERSONS TAKING AN OVERDOSE AND PASSED OUT FOR SEVERAL HOURS. OLD TIMERS ARE VERY CAREFUL WITH THIS MEDICINE (XÍL). THIS IS ONE INDIAN MEDICINE THAT SHOULD BE LABELED(K'ÁALANGAA).

AFTER IT DRIES REAL HARD SOME PEOPLE GRIND IT INTO A POWDER AND USE IT FOR A POWERFUL SNEEZING POWDER. THE SNEEZING (GATS'ISÁA) IS STRONG ENOUGH TO JAR ANY SINUS INFECTION LOOSE. I'VE SEEN ITS RESULTS ON PEOPLE THAT USE IT. THE PLANT IS IN THE SAME LEAF FAMILY AS SKUNK CABBAGE (HLGÚN). BEARS (TAAN) DIG UP THE PLANTS AND EAT THE ROOTS OF BOTH PLANTS AFTER THEY COME OUT OF WINTER (SÁNGGAA) HIBERNATION.

Process For Making
Devil's Club Tonic
(Ts'iihlanjaaw)

I have written about it in the Haida Language (xaadas kíl) and it went over big. I am an old hand at making devil club (ts'-íihlanjaaw) medicine (xíl). Ed Cogo, my father (kúsh waan) taught me the process in my youth. In 55 years I have probably made over two thousand (láagwa-tlaláay-sdáng) gallons all total.

This medicine (xíl) is used quite a bit and doctors who had it analyzed found that it was a very good blood purifier. This one thing is big in itself. Haida (xaadas) in the old days used it extensively. The haida custom calls for a person of the opposite phratry making the medicine for ones use. Say an eagle (ts'áak) would make the medicine (xíl)

FOR A (YÁAHL) OR RAVEN. IN MY CASE I AM EAGLE (TS'ÁAK) WOULD MAKE THE MEDICINE (XÍL) FOR MY WIFE WHO IS RAVEN (YÁAHL). BEFORE I TAKE A CASE WE GO THROUGH A LITTLE RITUAL OF TOKEN PAYMENT (GÁAD GÍN XA'ÁAW) NATIVE CUSTOM.

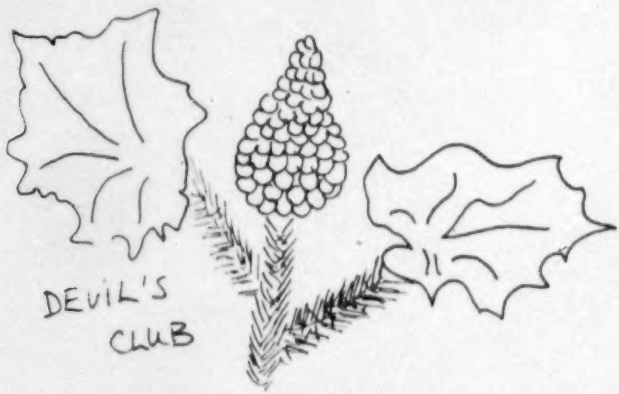
FIRST A PERSON HAS TO BELIEVE IN IT AND THAT THE DEVIL'S CLUB (TS'ÍIHLAN JAAW) WILL HELP.

SECOND THE ONE MAKING THE MEDICINE ALSO HAS TO BELIEVE IN ITS USE FULLY.

THIRD THE PERSON WHO IS TO RECEIVE THE MEDICINE (XÍL) USUALLY PUTS DOWN A FEW DOLLARS FOR TOKEN PAYMENTS. THIS IS ALSO CALLED (GAAD-GÍN XA'ÁAW) ONE OF THE RITUALS. I WILL TELL ABOUT HOW I GO ABOUT MAKING THE MEDICINE (XÍL).

I GO OUT IN THE MORNING LOOKING FOR A GOOD STAND OF DEVIL'S CLUB. A GOOD PLACE TO LOOK IS NEAR THE BEACH (CHÁAW SALÍI) FACING STRONG SOUTHEAST WINDS (XÍKW). THIS HAS THE BENEFIT OF SEA SPRAY ENRICHING THE SOIL (TANGÁA).

IN THE OLD DAYS A LARGE KNIFE (YA'ÁATS') WAS USED TO CUT THE STOCK. AFTER YOU CUT DOWN A FEW STOCKS ABOUT FIVE OR SIX FEET LONG, YOU CUT IT UP INTO LENGTHS OF ABOUT EIGHTEEN INCHES (TLÁAHL WAAK SDÁANSAANGAA). THIS IS A GOOD WAY TO FILL UP A BOX. NOW-A-DAYS I USE A BRUSH CUTTER AND THICK RUBBER GLOVES (STLAHL K'ÚNK).



NEXT, I GO HOME WITH THE STOCK. I GET TWO BOXES, ONE FOR SCRAPING RESIDUE AND THE OTHER FOR THE INNER BARK WHICH IS THE ONE I BOIL. I USE THE BACK SIDE OF A LARGE OLD BUTCHER KNIFE (TAAKADÁAW) TO SCRAPE OFF THE SHARP PRICKLY THORNS AND THE OUTER GREY BARK (K'UTS). THE INNER GREEN (SGINÚU) BARK (K'UTS) IS NOW PEELED OFF WITH THE SHARP (K'I GÁAY) SIDE OF THE KNIFE. YOU FOLLOW THIS PROCESS TILL ALL THE STOCK IS USED UP. FROM A BOX FULL OF STOCK I GET ENOUGH SAVINGS FOR ABOUT THREE BOILINGS. I USE A THREE GALLON POT (GAN) OR CONTAINER TO BOIL THE BARK (K'UTS). FOR A BLEND AND TO ENRICH THE MEDICINE (XÍL) I PUT IN THREE DIFFERENT SPROUTING TREES ABOUT 8 INCHES LONG. ONE SPRUCE (KÍIT), ONE CEDAR (TS'ÚU) AND ONE HEMLOCK (K'ÁANG). YOU PULL THESE UP ROOTS AND ALL AND USE ALL OF IT. YOU WASH THESE UNDER A FAUCET AND BOIL WITH THE DEVIL'S CLUB. YOU START WITH TWO GALLONS OF COLD WATER (GÁNTL) IN THE POT (GAN). ADD

TWO HANDS FULL OF DEVIL'S CLUB BARK AND THE THREE SMALL TREES. NOTE: SOME MAKERS PUT IN SOME ALDER BARK (KÁL K'UTS) FOR COLOR AND FLAVOR (K'ÚSGAT LÁA). BRING TO BOIL AND SIMMER THREE HOURS (K'ASGAT HLGÚNAHL). COOL AND PUT INTO HALF GALLON JARS (KÁLK) AND KEEP IN COOLER. ONE CUP FULL THREE TIMES A DAY DOES THE TRICK. THOSE WHO DRINK THIS MEDICINE (XÍL) SWEAR BY IT. DRINK (TS'ÍIHLANJAAW) FOR HEALTH. (TS'-ÍIHLANJAAW HL NÍIHL). THANK YOU (HAAWAAW).

PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND